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AUTHOR	Ford, James F.
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ABSTRACT

This article, concerning the role of foreign language instruction within the framework of career education, provides a brief review of newly emerging educational theory. Several definitions of career education trace their origins back to the "life adjustment" educational philosophy proposed by John Dewey. A model program for career education, the Comprehensive Career Education Model being developed by the Center for Vocational and Technical Education at Ohio State University, is described. The final section of the article is devoted to ways in which foreign language instruction can be oriented toward the concept of career education. (RL)

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A FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATOR LOOKS AT CAREER EDUCATION

By James F. Ford, Oklahoma State University
A paper presented at the Modern Language Section, AEA Convention
November 21, 1972

Before attempting to relate foreign language study or any other academic field to career education, it seems necessary to have some understanding as to what is meant by the term "career education", how and why the concept came into being, as well as what part it is envisioned to play in American public education.

It is often true that we can better understand what something is by first understanding what it is not. When I first became aware of the term "career education" at Ohio State University, knowing that it emanated from the department of Vocational and Technical Education, my first impression was that this was just a new label for something that we had had in the schools all along, better known as Industrial Arts or Vocational Education. It was just an attempt, I thought, to make "shop" sound more palatable to the parents of all those "non-academically oriented" students for whom college is out of reach and who must settle for learning to become mechanics and carpenters.

However, according to the proponents of career education, nothing could be further from the trutn. To understand what career education is, then we must first accept that it is not a new name for Vocational Education. The truth of this declaration is evidenced in the presently slight, but growing body of literature surrounding the subject as well as by the involvement of educators from diverse fields in developmental and pilot projects. The Center for Vocational and Technical Education at Ohio State in the development of its Comprehensive Career Education Model -- of which I would like to talk a little more later -- solicited input from individuals representing a wide vareity of interests and fields, even as "non-vocational" as Foreign Language Education.

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Is "career education" then an attempt by Vocational and Technical Education to take over or otherwise dominate public education? The answer is "no", at least from the more moderate advocates. I should point out that the reason for the qualification with the word "moderate" is that most movements, innovations, panaceas and bandwagons, past and present, on the educational scene have all had their share of immoderates. Perhaps no one knows that better than you and I in Foreign Language Education. And I'm sure that this fact has contributed greatly to the "high mortality rate of panaceas" and the growing junk yards of broken-down bandwagons. (Hoyt et al, 1972)

Career Education, then, is not Vocational Education, nor General Education, nor something that exists apart and separate from these two. In theory and practice it is to include both General and Vocational Education. In the words of its proponents, "the concept would both 'generalize' Vocational Education and 'vocationalize' General Education". (Hoyt et al, 1972)

Career Education Defined

In searching the literature one finds an abundance of definitions of career education. Although the various definitions may differ in emphasis, they generally agree in focus. I offer the following for your consideration:

Kenneth Hoyt defines career education...

> as the total effort of public education and the community aimed at helping all individuals to become familiar with the values of a work-oriented society, to intergrate these values into the personal value systems, and to implement these values into their lives in such a way that work becomes possible, meaningful, and satisfying to each individual. (Hoyt et al, 1972)

Rupert Evans says that...

> career education is the total effort of the community to develop a personally satisfying succession of opportunities for service through work, paid or unpaid, extending throughout life. (Hoyt et al, 1972)

Associate Commissioner of Education Worthington has described career education as...

> a bold new design for education that will effect a blend of academic, general and work-skills learning so that individuals passing through the system will be ready for economic self-sufficiency, for a personally satisfying life, for new learning experiences appropriate to career development and avccational interests. (Herr, 1972)

And finally a statement from the Bureau of Adult Vocation and Technical Education:

> It is a comprehensive educational program focused on careers, which begins in grade one or earlier and continues through the adult years. For elementary and secondary education, the program includes a structuring of basic subjects, grades 1-12, around the theme of career opportunities and requirements in the world of work....Career education not only provides job information and skill development but also helps students to develop attitudes about the personal, psychological, social and economic significance of work. (Herr, 1972).

From these definitions, several implications become clear: the objectives of career education are to be delivered through the basic subject matter areas in the public school

curriculum, thus involving teachers of these subject matter areas; its implementation is not to be limited exclusively to the school setting, but will utilize resources and personnel from the community at large -- from business, industry and the professions; it is to affect all students -- not just the "non-academic" -- from pre-school through post-secondary and is to include adult and continuing education as well as college education. To this last point, the advocates of career education view the educational process as a life-long continuum from which an individual may leave at any point with a salable skill and into which he may re-enter as his career interests and needs change. In the words of one writer, "career education will seek to extend its time horizons from 'womb to tomb'", and he likens it to a broad freeway with convenient exits and on-ramps. (Hoyt et al, 1972)

Many of the ideas advocated by the proponents of career education should not be new to the readers of the so-called "new romantic critics" of education, who in recent years have bombarded the public with a plethora of articles and books highly critical of the public schools as they now exist. Perhaps the most radical of these critics of public education has been Ivan Illich, who in his book DeSchooling Society has recommended just what the title implies -- the complete removal of the educational process from the school setting and placing it in the community. Following Illich's reasoning, if one wants to learn a foreign language he goes to one who speaks the language; or if one is interested in medicine, he arranges an apprenticeship with a surgeon. Of course, career education does not imply anything so extreme, but it does draw some of its impetus from the recent general dissatisfaction with the state of public education.

Whether you and I as individuals or as a unified group of foreign language educators believe that teachers and schools are doing a good job is of little consequence if other educators, administrators, parents and the general public believe that something is seriously awry with public education. This feeling is evidenced by the cutback in educational expenditures and the growing clamor for "accountability". Career education is seen by many as at least a partial remedy to what ails public education.

One of its most vociferous and influential advocates is the current U. S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland, Jr. Writing in a recent issue of the American Vocational Journal, Commissioner Marland has this to say regarding the block of courses in high schools which are customarily labeled General Education:

> If we examine by any measure we care to use the accomplishment records of the schools, we find that the most severe failings can be found in the General Education Program. (Marland, 1972)

The Commissioner goes on to say that...

> the General Education program fails because it has no real goals. It doesn't prepare students for a job, nor does it prepare them for higher education. It seems to be education for its own sake -- or because it's law. (Marland, 1972)

If the foregoing were not sufficiently strong indictments of General Education, the New York Times published the following quote from Commissioner Marland:

> If in the time I am here I can bring about a change in the public attitude so that at least 50 percent of young people choose career education; and, if that abomination we call General Education were forever dissolved; and, if every child upon completing high school were ready for a job or for higher education, then I will have felt that I have made a difference. (Herr, 1972)

One might conclude from these statements that Career Education is "in" because the hand

that pulls the federal purse strings is totally dedicated to the concept. However, it would be both an oversimplification and a mistake to attribute the current interest in the movement solely to the personal conviction and committment of one Commissioner Marland.

The concept did not suddenly burst upon the educational horizon after having been spawned in a U.S.O.E. think tank. Like practically all movements in American education, career education has its historical antecedents. The historical and philosophical bases are traced and documented by Professor Edwin Herr and it is not within the scope of this discussion to duplicate this documentation; however, as one of the antecedents, Professor Herr calls to our attention "Life Adjustment" education of the 30's and 40's which grew largely out of the philosophy of John Dewey. (Herr, 1972)

To further support their case, the advocates of career education offer some very revealing and disturbing statistics. For example, it is pointed out that almost 100 percent of the population has been led to believe that the attainment of a college degree is not only desirable but is "the best and surest route to occupational success"; yet, less than 17 percent can hope to reach this level of educational achievement. The point is made that "a viable democracy cannot afford to view 83 percent of its population as 'second class' citizens." (Hoyt et al, 1972). These critics of public education are asking how a system can be justified that exists primarily to prepare all of its clientele for higher education when only "20% of the existing and foreseeable jobs require a baccalaureate degree." (Hoyt et al, 1972). It is, perhaps, such statistics as these which have led Commissioner Marland to conclude that "the curriculum should be built around jobs and work." (Marland, 1972)

To carry out the objectives of infusing career education into the curriculum the following steps have been taken by the U.S.O.E.:

(1) 20,000 distinct jobs that people fill have been identified;
(2) These jobs have been codified into 15 major groupings called career clusters (e.g. health, marketing, public service, humanities, manufacturing, etc.) (Marland, 1972)

The U.S.O.E. is currently funding for development a school-based model for career education as well as three out-of-school models. (Marland, 1972). The school-based model is being developed by the Center for Vocational and Technical Education (C.V.T.E.) at Ohio State University and is being pilot-tested in six Local Educational Agencies (translation: public school systems). The pilot systems are the public schools of Atlanta; Los Angeles; Hackensack, New Jersey; Pontiac, Michigan; Mesa, Arizona; and Jefferson County, Colorado. There are some 85,000 students and 4,200 educational staff involved in the piloting of the school-based model. (Drier, 1972)

In those school systems where career education becomes a reality, students will be affected somewhat in the following manner:

(1) Grades K-6: Students will be made aware of and will become familiar with career clusters.
(2) Grades 7-9: Students will explore the clusters that interest them most, and opportunities are afforded each student to explore a single cluster of his choice in depth.
(3) Grades 10-12: Students will intensely pursue a chosen career cluster and may exercise the following options:
    (a) acquire an immediate employment skill in order to exit into the job market;
    (b) go on for further occupational training at a post-secondary institution;

(c) enroll in a college or university and pursue a professional degree.

(Marland, 1972; Drier, 1972)

In developing the school-based model, the C.V.T.E. staff at Ohio State developed a matrix made up of eight basic career education elements to span grades 9-12. Each of the eight basic elements leads across the public school experience to a desired outcome:

Awarenesses	Outcomes
Career Awareness	→ Career Identity
Self Awareness	→ Self Identity
Appreciations, Attitudes	→ Self-Social Fulfillment
Decision-Making Skills	→ Career Decisions
Economic Awareness	→ Economic Understandings
Skill Awareness and Beginning Competence	→ Employment Skills
Employability Skills	→ Career Placement
Educational Awareness	→ Educational Identity

(Drier, 1972)

The eight elements lead to 32 career education themes and within the themes there have been developed some 1,500 specific goals and over 3,000 performance objectives. These specific goals and performance objectives have been used to develop curriculum units which are now being infused into the various subject matter areas in the pilot schools. (Drier, 1972)

A complete description and explanation of the "Comprehensive Career Education Model" (C.C.E.M.) would require an entire presentation of its own. But suffice it to say that the project is well-funded and well-staffed with a group of committed, knowledgeable individuals who are intensely serious about their work.

Since the pilot testing has just begun, there is no information available as to the reaction of the teachers involved, or the impact upon the traditional curriculum. However, I did come by, quite coincidentally, an article by Orval Seaman, Chairman of the Mathematics Department at Jefferson High School, Edgewater, Colorado. I assume from the location of the school, as well as from the theme of Mr. Seaman's paper, that he and his school are involved in the implementation of the C.C.E.M. He states how involvement in career education has changed his role as a secondary classroom teacher. He identifies three major changes in his role that have come about as a result of career education being implemented in his school:

(1) Involvement in the production of <u>relevant</u> course material. By <u>relevant</u> material, Mr. Seaman implies material which makes it obvious to the student why he should study Math and how he can put it to use outside the confines of the school.
(2) Utilization of materials to help students find specific job titles and job information. Mr. Seaman writes that this is not the sole responsibility of the counselor and that "there must be methods and procedures built into classroom activities to make students aware of the many different jobs outside their realm of experience."
(3) Use of community resources in classroom activities. Such resources as "classroom speeches given by representatives of companies, field trips to actual work situations, student interviews of local businessmen, and written education material that

> "work study programs have utilized the business world for some time..." and that "curriculum areas can make better use of community resources." Mr. Seaman reports that he has found "these community experts to be extremely cooperative and willing to devote time to these activities." (Seaman, 1972)

Here of course we have a very positive testimonial. There may very well be unfavorable reactions from teachers who find themselves involved in the implementation of the career education model.

I am not here to prophesy or predict that career education will soon pervade all public education nor that we will all become career educators whether we wish to or not. It has been my purpose thus far to give you a brief sketch of the what, why and how of career education as I see it. As foreign language teachers there are two extreme positions that we could take in regard to career education. One would be to abandon our place within "that abomination called General Education" (Marland, 1971) and devote our energies entirely to practical considerations with possible career application. The other extreme position would be that expressed by the late William Riley Parker in his article "Why a Foreign Language Requirement," recently reprinted in the Northeast Conference publication, The Case for Foreign Language Study: that is to simply refuse to discuss vocational implications of foreign language study on the grounds that such arguments are irrelevant to the justification of a discipline which contributes to a general or liberal education. In my judgment we can ill afford to take either of these extreme positions. I do not see the issue as being one of "damned if we do and damned if we don't." As was pointed out earlier, most proponents of career education view the concept as encompassing both general and vocational education. Perhaps what we need to do is to move somewhat, or better yet, to extend our influence into community and vocational areas. Some ways of effecting this extension have already been suggested.

Let us return at this point to the suggestions made by our secondary mathematics teacher from Colorado. One point that he mentioned was the "utilization of materials to help students find specific job titles and job information." This may mean that we as teachers will have to familiarize ourselves with materials and publications that we have up until now considered outside our domain; such materials as the Dictionary of Occupational Titles and the Occupational Outlook Handbook, perhaps some of the general literature on career education as well as whatever we may have that specifically applies to our area. (See sources).

It has already been suggested, and I'd like to reiterate at this point, that in matters of guiding our students, we can't depend upon or realistically expect our guidance counselors to do all of the "guiding" and "counselling". The guidance counselor cannot be expected to know all things about all careers. In his talk to the Central States Conference titled, "The Foreign Language Teacher or the Guidance Counselor: Who's Passing the Buck," Ron Smith reminded us that we should keep in mind that the counselor is just as subject as we are to falling into a pattern of behavior in which one somehow does not take the time to question whether it is the most appropriate way, with... limited resources, to accomplish what one deep down inside knows are the most important things for us to be doing. Smith went on to say in the same talk that if we want changes made in our respective schools we must set about making these changes; and we are admonished not to waste our professional energies fighting the guidance counselor but to convince him that we should all be working together for the ultimate benefit of all of our students.

We must do more than simply supply our students with a list of occupations that require varying degrees of foreign language competency. I am afraid that what most of us have done along these lines in the past has been rather vague and general. Lists of occupations requiring foreign language skills are useful and are certainly a necessary

starting point, but I am suggesting that we need more information such as just how much and what kinds of language skills these careers require so that we can be as honest and realistic with students as possible.

This kind of information gathering has already begun here in Arkansas by Wilma Jimerson at the State Department of Education. Thanks to her initiative, sometime in the near future Arkansas foreign language teachers should have access to the kinds of job-related information that students need and want to know about. The accessability of such information from local businesses and industries leads to the next point made by our Colorado mathematics teacher: "the use of community resources in classroom activities." I am not going to stand here and tell you how you should go about doing this or anything else. If I've learned anything about education in the last few years it has been this: that the more the individual classroom teacher is involved in decision making, program development, and planned curriculum change, the more successful the resulting program is likely to be. But I'm sure that in the area of community involvement certain things suggest themselves to you all as to me -- such things as inviting into your classrooms representatives from those firms with international business relations or otherwise allowing your students to explore with these firms those career opportunities that require foreign language skills. Particularly interesting and valuable would be arranging interviews with employees who have used foreign language skills in the field. I am sure that you all can come up with many other ways to take advantage of these community resources which will be available to you.

And now to the last point: "involvement in the production of relevant course materials." This is not to suggest that we don't already have "relevant course materials" which are appropriate to carry out the goals and objectives of most of our basic language teaching tasks. However, if we are to concern ourselves with the specific skill requirements of various occupations and careers, we will probably have to turn more and more to innovative concepts such as the "mini-course" and more individualized and personalized instruction. In adapting to this new role, the teacher can no longer afford to pose as the "know-it-all" authority figure. This role must be at least partially supplanted by the role of what Gilbert Jarvis and others have called a "facilitator of learning". Such a role would include some elements of the guidance counselor as well as motivator, diagnostician, and flexible prescriber. (Gougher, 1971)

This change of emphasis in the traditional role of the teacher amounts to our acting less like "dispensers of knowledge and more like resource persons and guides. This would allow us, to use Caleb Gateggno's phrase, "to subordinate teaching to learning", which I suspect this whole business of education should be about. The possibilities are limited only by our imagination and the degree to which we are willing to allow our students to proceed on their own.

I wish to point out, however, in conclusion that even as we attend to career concerns in our discipline, we should not forget or neglect an equally important task that we are capable of fulfilling. Some four years ago I was serving on the Arkansas Advisory Council on Foreign Language Teaching along with Wilma, Lee Alexander, Margaret Clark and other colleagues from around the state. Dr. L. E. Guinn, whom most of you know, was also serving on that council, and Larry was largely responsible for the drafting of a position paper on "Why Study a Foreign Language in Arkansas". I would like to include some remarks from Larry's paper, since they seem to me to be an especially appropriate addition to this discussion:

> What we as FL teachers have to offer is this. Within the limited world of bilingualism and biculturalism which we can create in our FL classrooms, we can probably do more, and do it more directly, to help our students understand the nature of themselves as young men and women

limited by their language and culture than can anyone in any other discipline. Let no one say that this is not useful: it is. It is a great deal more useful in Arkansas than are the skills which might possibly help someone get a better job, simply because it is the more badly needed thing. At the same time, we offer some highly useful knowledge and methods. It will not do simply to get good jobs for our people from the delta, the hills, or urban poverty areas; they must be able to perform in those jobs. If they fail to learn the skills they need, they will fail at the job; if they cannot "fit" as people they will fail at the job. It would be foolish to claim that learning Spanish will solve all the problems. But if in learning Spanish one finds that he can successfully become bilingual and bicultural, truly so and without giving up his native culture and language or being obliged to regard these as valueless, then he learns that he can become bi-dialectal, and polycultural within his own nation. And at the same time he learns how to do this. It will be a very long time before "English for the Disadvantaged" and other such approaches can do what we very nearly can do right now. It is for this reason that we can claim for ourselves a unique kind of utility in even the more apparently non-utilitarian aspects of what we do. (Guinn, 1968)

One of the elements of the school-based C.C.E.M. is "self awareness" which leads to "self-identity". Florence Stiener, one of our own foreign language educators, has written that "this discovery of self leads to a different approach to learning and growing, which has implications far beyond the learning of a foreign language." (Gougher, 1972)

So let us not forget that even as we attend to career concerns - and I believe that we should do this - we still have a much broader and perhaps an even more important function to fulfill in providing a more liberating educational experience for all of our students - the vocationally oriented as well as the college-bound, the poor as well as the middle-class.

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